SUMMARY OF THE
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 19, 2000

The Quality Systems Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Friday, April 19, 2000 at 1:00 pm Eastern Standard Time (EST). The meeting was lead by the committee's chair, Mr. Joe Slayton. A list of committee members is given in Attachment A.

Discussion/Action Items

- The Committee discussed nominees for the upcoming replacement of a departing contributor. The Committee would like this to be a microbiologist (environmental) but applicants so far all are chemists. **Action item**: All committee members will check their contacts for a candidate and Joe Slayton will send a message to Irene Ronning, Chair of the Membership & Outreach Committee.

- The Committee discussed the recent NELAC Board of Directors meeting with Wilson Hershey of ELAB. ELAB would like the Board's support their position on dropping section 5.12.4 (legal chain of custody) from the standards. **Action Item:** Joe Slayton will forward Wilson Hershey a copy of the new appendix and glossary terms.

- The remainder of the meeting was used to discuss comments from CA, FL and PA regarding microbiology testing, appendix D.3.
  - FL DEP commented that D.3.8.e could be interpreted to mean disposable pipets must be calibrated. The Committee agreed to add clarification that such verification was to be provided by the manufacturer and that these records were to be retained.
  - FL commented on D.3.6.e and 5.10.5 that media like calibration standards need not be discarded if it could be shown to still meet the media criteria. The Committee agreed and added language to D.3.6 and 5.10.5.
  - PA DEP commented on 5.9.4.1.d regarding microbiology testing. The Committee decided to remove microbiology items from this section and rely on D.3.8.
  - PA DEP comment on 5.9.4.1.g. This section had already been updated as per previously received comments (removed autoclave requirements from 5.9.4.1.g and increased the related items in D.3.8.c.2.
  - PA commented on 5.12.3.3 and the need for the dates/times for various steps in the test "follow-up analyses". The Committee decided to add this requirement but for "time controlled steps" , e.g., extractions, distillations, incubations.
  - PA commented on D.3.1 (negative control) suggesting additional clarification of what specifically the lab must do. Quality Systems had added a new D.3.1.a.2

which are appropriate for both SDWA laboratories and small NPDES laboratories performing microbiology testing.

- PA commented on D.3.2 duplicate analysis. The Committee disagreed with the necessity for duplicate analysis in a test with significant imprecision but agreed to decreased the analysis to 10%.
- PA commented on D.3.3.a. indicating clarification was need on method evaluation of approved methods. The Committee agreed and has changed the standard to indicate that labs are required to demonstrate proficiency with microbiology test methods prior to use. The requirements for this demonstration are included in D.3.3.a.1.
- PA commented on D.3.5.a regarding problem of having multiple analysts count colonies, etc. in a one person lab. The Committee agrees and had already added clarification of the small lab.
- PA DEP commented on D.6 with concerns that laboratories must use commercially prepared media if available. The Committee did not agree to be this restrictive, i.e., left the standards general enough to allow this. However, the numerous requirements on media in the standard, where deemed sufficient to assure that if the laboratory did prepare media (from "scratch") that it would be of the necessary quality.
- California Dept. of Health commented on D.3.1 that additional clarification was needed on exactly what the laboratory must do. As per the PA DEP comment on the same section, the Committee has added clarifying language to D.3.1.a (negative controls) and D.3.1.b (positive controls).
- CA commented on D. 3.2 concerning 10% requirement for duplicate. The Committee agreed and this will be proposed as 5%.
- CA commented on D.3.8.b.2 with regard to monitoring of autoclave performance. The Committee agreed and has added a new D.3.2.b.e, which included continuous monitoring of temperature and the use of chemical and biological indicators.

- **Action Item:** Joe Slayton to update homework table to reflect current status.

- **Action Item:** Joe Slayton to updated Chapter 5 to reflect consensus decisions from 4/19 meeting.

Attachment A

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Quality Systems Committee
April 19, 2000

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